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27 April 1955

TO : All Division, Branch, and Staff Chiefs, ERA, ORR
FROM : Chief, Economic Research, ORR
SUBJECT: ERA Procedures for Reading Panel Requirements

1. The filing and periodic updating of intelligible, specific reading panel requirements is of fundamental importance for all branches and staffs of the ERA. Partly on the basis of these requirements, the inflowing stream of information is routed from OCD to ORR. Almost solely on the basis of these requirements, the requested information is routed to specific branches and staffs within the ERA.

2. Each division chief* shall establish a system for guiding the periodic review and updating of respective branch requirements for each reading panel.

3. Each division system shall include the following features:

- a. Annual updating. An updated basic set of requirements for each reading panel shall be submitted at least once per year, preferably immediately after approval of the branch program. At no time shall a set of basic reading panel requirements be more than one year old.
- b. Quarterly review. Standing reading panel requirements shall receive routine review at least once per quarter. Revisions shall be transmitted in writing to each reading panel. Revisions shall reflect both the increasing sensitivity and knowledge of the branch and the changing intelligence targets where appropriate.
- c. Informal intelligibility coordination with the reading panels. Drafts of requirements shall be coordinated informally with the reading panel chiefs prior to formal transmittal in order to insure the proper balance and intelligibility to the non-specialist.

* The Industrial Division especially already has demonstrated proficiency along these lines. (For information only; delete in final form).

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(The necessary number of copies can be determined during this coordination.)*

- d. Branch briefing for the reading panel. Reading panels shall be briefed by the branches at least once per year. Discussions and close liaison should be encouraged. Routing efficiency often can be increased by properly recognizing the importance of reading panel members to the intelligence process of each branch.
4. Each branch and staff chief shall have the primary responsibility for maintaining comprehensive, intelligible requirements on file with each reading panel.
5. The following points shall be noted in writing branch requirements:
 - a. Intelligibility to the non-specialist. Information requirements in general shall be translated from the technical language and professional jargon of the specific branch into a set of key words, symbols, commodity names, and ideas which can be recognized quickly by the non-specialist on the reading panels. Branch requirements that are absolutely inclusive and technically perfect to a specialist may be beyond the comprehension of members of the reading panels who must route large volumes of paper in a relatively short time.
 - b. Balance. Information requirements shall have the proper balance between general orientation and specificity. The determination of proper balance ultimately must be made by the reading panel.
 - c. Specificity.
 - (1) Information requirements shall include:
 - (a) lists of specific classes of data which can be recognized at sight, such as key commodity names, raw materials, and trade names;
 - (b) careful delineation of the specific branch interest as opposed to the dovetailing interests of other branches;

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- (c) lists of publications (i) specific journals, reports, and other publications which are required on a continuing basis; (ii) publications which are frequent sources of the required data; (iii) other publications which might prove fruitful.
- (2) Information requirements should avoid vague concepts and abstractions which cannot be related quickly to the data on incoming documents by the panel members.
- d. Inclusiveness. Information requirements shall include all data which are significant to the mission and functions of the branch. Branches shall consider feasibility and past availability of data and shall request also the specific indirect data which facilitate estimation of important data not usually directly available.
- e. Economy. Information requirements shall be revised to discontinue the routing of worthless information which results in a costly waste of branch manpower. Care must be taken not to discontinue the routing of information which is potentially very valuable when knowledge and methods become cumulatively more refined. Critical judgment and perceptive analysis of the intelligence targets are of obvious importance in the selection of information.

6. Reading panel requirements* shall be written in the following minimum format:

- a. Mission and functions of the branch.
- b. Areas of interest.

Subdivide into primary and secondary if appropriate.

Include both geographical areas and commodity fields as appropriate.

Allert attention to transshipment points outside the Sino-Soviet

Bloc which serve as channels for illegal trade.

* Many of these elements appear in existing branch requirements, especially those for I/EE. Attention is invited to this requirement which in many respects is a model for balance, clarity, and inclusiveness. (For information only; delete in final form.)

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c. Topical class-listing of identification words and symbols.

(This listing shall determine in a large measure whether the document under consideration by the reading panel member is deemed relevant to your branch needs.)*

Include, with appropriate sub-categories, the names of raw materials, commodities, end-use items, equipment, component parts, trade names, and other categories which may be useful to the branch.

d. Description of types of data required.

Make descriptions as terse as is consistent with clarity.

Include, among other items, the following:

- (1) A high priority request for (a) all Sino-Soviet Bloc official statistics on the branch interest; (b) a retention copy (copies) of economy-wide plan and plan fulfillment releases for Sino-Soviet Bloc countries.
- (2) Appropriate guidance on branch phases of interest such as types of data on production, consumption, prices, investment, trade, etc.
- (3) Delineation of the specific branch interest from the dovetailing interest of related branches.

e. Listing of source publications.

- (1) List all specific publications and/or documents required on a continuing basis. (These are in addition to the professional journals which branches receive on an annual subscription basis.)*
- (2) List specific publications or documents which frequently contain data required by the branch.
- (3) List additional types of sources which may prove fertile.

f. Branch personnel to be contacted for additional clarification.

g. Other.

(Branches may find it advantageous to develop a lexicon of Sino-Soviet country equivalents to the main categories under (c) above).***

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Chief, Economic Research
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